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"cut the road" from the goats (tjemetela) to keep them away from the gardens. They safely reach the little plain where nothing but hard Gramineae grow. There the boys begin to play, having handed over the charge of the goats to the youngest of the party. The little chap gets tired of watching; little by little the whole herd goes back to the forbidden garden and eats greedily of the savoury stems of the mealies! After a while, the boys discover that the goats are gone. They run after them, and bring them back. But the mistress of the garden passes near by, coming back from the well with her pitcher on her head. She sees the harm done, inspects the traces of the goats, knows by them which herd has plundered her field, uproots some of the spoiled stems and with great clamour goes to the village of the guilty boys and throws down the mealies right before the hut of the father. No compensation is claimed in such a case, generally, but the father will thrash the boys when they come back; or should there be a recurrence of the offence, the husband of the owner of the garden will himself administer a correction to the careless goatherds.

827 Boys herding the goats have certain customs. When one of them emits a certain unseemly sound from the rectum, the others say to him: "Fakisa!" He must answer: "Cita munyakanya goben." (I have let out my wind by the rectum). This formula, which is Zulu, is secret. If he does not know it, they beat him and make him look after the goats till the end of the day. Should another boy reveal the answer to the uninitiated, they will punish him in the same way.

2) STEALING.

685 What were they doing when the goats escaped? They had probably themselves succeeded in stealing some sweet potatoes and were roasting them on a little fire, well hidden in the velt. Or they had discovered in the bush a broken pot, an old disused and perforated mortar, which some one had placed there to attract bees. And indeed there was honey inside. They had stolen it... Goatherds are regular thieves and known as such.

606 be banished from their thoughts. They obey that conviction when
835 practising the avoidance rites.

The wife of the brother-in-law, the Great Mukonwana.

607 This particular respect is even more marked in the relations of
 a man with the wife of his wife's brother. Indeed the avoidance
 is pushed further than with the mother-in-law. A Native of
 the Ndjao tribe (which has the same customs as the Thonga tribe
 in this respect) described to me vividly the extraordinary
 marks of fear that these two persons show each other when they
 meet on the road. The story will be told when speaking of the Ba-
 Ndjao. Here are some other marks of this extraordinary respect.

607 The wife's brother's wife must always keep her breasts covered
834 in the village of her husband's sister's husband. Only when she
 has had a child is she permitted to "open her clothing;" but then
 she must fix a leaf in her hair (as if to show that she does not forget
 the special reserve which she is bound to maintain). (Khoson
 region.)

607 When a man travels with his great mukonwana and they have to
576 cross a river, they will avoid entering the same boat. It may
827 happen to anyone to emit an unseemly sound from the rectum;
 but if the great mukonwana is present, she looks on this as a grave
 offence. A fine must be paid to her, a hoe, for instance. If the
 guilty man has nothing to give her, he at once breaks a twig from a
 tree and presents it to her as a token that the proper fine will be
 forthcoming in due time! He must never use words of insult
 in her presence, even if he addresses them to another person.

607 If he loses his temper before her she will go to the old people of
844 her husband's village and tell them: "He has insulted me." On
 the other hand the great mukonwana is bound to go and assist
 the wife of this man when she gives birth to a child. At least this
 is the rule in the Khosa clan and also in Maputju. The two
 women live on very good terms with each other; they are
607 *tinhombe*. The man himself, when he visits his relatives-in-law, has
 the right of sleeping in the hut of the great mukonwana. We have
 seen that, during the first months after his marriage, he is received
 in the hut of his mother-in-law. Why is this? Because the oxen

nwalihlanga, (mu-ba) femur ; *lihandja*, tibia ; they seem to know 192
 nothing of the radius and the peroneus ; *guywa-guywana*, rotula ; 826
nhlolo, astragalus ; other bones are called by the name of the region,
 or the organ, to which they belong : the bone of the pelvis, *nyongwa*
 (yin-tin), the hip ; the wrist bones, *hlakala* ; those of the palm,
shipapa ; those of the fingers, *litiho* ; those of the toes, *shikuwana* ;
 those of the ankle, *shirendje* ; of the sole, *nkondjo* (mu-mi) ; the
 thumb is called *khudju* (dji-ma), and the big toe, the great *shiku-*
wana.

The different organs are also known : *byongwe* (bu-ma) (Dj.)
bongwe (Ro.) is the brain ; *tihlo*, pl. *mahlo*, the eye ; *ndlebe* (yin-tin),
 the ear ; *nhompfu* (yin-tin), the nose ; *nemo*, pl. *milomo*, the lips
 and the mouth ; *lidjimi*, the tongue ; *nkolo* (mu-mi), the throat ;
 they know that there are two pipes, one for food, the other for air,
 but they are not sure which is in front and which behind ! *Hahu*
 (dji-ma), (Ro.), *phaphu* (Dj.), lungs ; *shidyelo*, the stomach ; *mbilu*
 (yin-tin), the heart ; *shibindji*, the liver ; *libengo*, the spleen ;
lipfalo, the diaphragm ; *rumbu* (dji-ma), the bowels, including the
 male internal genitalia ; external genitalia of man and woman are
 taboo ; *yinso* (yin-tin) means kidneys ; *nhlonge* (yin-tin), skin ;
nwala (mu-mi) nail ; *nsisi* (mu-mi), hair, etc.

But on pushing the inquiry somewhat further, we begin to
 notice a gross ignorance of important facts. The one word [843]
naiha (mu-mi) means nerves, tendons, ligaments, veins and
 arteries ; *nyimba* is the uterus, but also means pregnancy. Natives
 seem to think that a new *nyimba* is created at each pregnancy.
 They know nothing of the glands and I never discovered a name for
 the pancreas.

2) PHYSIOLOGICAL NOTIONS.

For this reason it is obvious that they cannot know what really 827
 happens in the body, and the marvellous and complicated system
 of our physical life. The mystery of the nervous system is
 entirely unknown, as is also the way in which blood (*ngati*, yin-tin)
 is formed from food, the digestive process, the circulation of the
 blood and the action of the air upon it, etc. We must not be

827 surprised at this ignorance ; our forefathers, three hundred years ago, were not much more advanced than the Natives are now.

On the other hand, Bantus, and especially Thongas, have a number of physiological ideas, which are pure superstitions, being devoid of any scientific foundation, but are, nevertheless, firmly believed and give rise to a number of practices, rites, and purifications. This is a most interesting subject and its study throws much light on the condition of primitive man. I have tried to explain these physiological conceptions in an article published in "La Revue d'Ethnographie et de Sociologie, Mai 1910." It is not possible to enter into all the details here, and I am obliged to refer the reader to that article for more particulars. However my description of the Life of the Tribe would not be complete if this subject were entirely omitted ; so I will rapidly give a general idea of this curious Native physiology.

661 In the Thonga mind, human life is composed of a certain number
851 of periods which follow each other, each having its particular
character.

127 As we have seen in the Evolution of man (Part I), *the first period* (*busahana*) extends from birth to the fall of the umbilical cord ; the baby is in a state of contamination owing to the lochia and must not be touched ; from the eighth or ninth day till the weaning takes place, is *the nursing period*, divided into two or three sub-periods by the presentation to the moon and the tying of the cotton string. The child has been progressively received into human society. Up to this day he has been considered as under treatment, because a child is not a complete healthy human being ; he is but *suster* (*mati*), not yet firm ; he is always threatened with disease and so he must continually drink his *milombanya*. The *hondola* ceremony closes this period and, by the act of weaning, he enters into the *childhood period*. (I. p. 59).

561 Infancy is a *bukhama*, a state of incompleteness fraught with
827 a certain defilement. Childhood is also a *bukhama*, and this contemptible inferiority must be removed by the circumcision rites, the significance of which is both physiological and social. When they wish to marry, viz., to pass from the class of unmarried to that of married people, young men and women must again

undergo a number of ceremonies of a social rather than of a physiological character.

But, in addition to these conceptions of human life, which determine so many acts and customs, there are at least five physiological phenomena which are believed to be attended with defilement, and which call for special precautions and rites: the menstrual flow, the lochia, disease, death and the birth of twins. To protect individuals, the family, or the clan, against these dangerous defilements, is one of the main preoccupations of any adult Thonga; and to gain this end they submit to endless ceremonies of purification, and observe innumerable taboos; thus it is plain that these physiological conceptions, absolutely unscientific and wrong as they are, play an immense part in their lives and cause them any amount of unnecessary trouble.

I need not deal at length with these five greatly dreaded physiological events. As regards menses, the subject has been treated in Vol. I, p. 187. (Compare Vol. II, p. 47); as regards lochia, see Vol. I, p. 43; concerning disease, we shall hear further in our third chapter. The tremendous contaminating power of death has been shown in the explanation of funeral rites, and the birth of twins will be studied more closely in the next chapter. The importance of these facts in the system of taboos will also be explained in Chap. IV.

The sexual act, though not considered as attended with contamination in the same manner as the five other physiological facts just referred to, is, however, subject to very characteristic restrictions. I have already explained them when dealing with conjugal life (I. p. 188). It will, however, perhaps not be superfluous to treat of this question again, considering it in its physiological aspect and in relation to the Bantu conception of Nature, and giving at the same time precise references to all the cases hitherto met with.

Let us first remark that, as some of my informants said, the sexual act when indulged in before marriage, by boys and girls in their *gangisa* (I. p. 150) has quite another bearing than when accomplished by married people. It would seem that it is not the physical act in itself which is attended with all these taboos,

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827 but the act in as far as it is a regular manifestation of the
 834 collective life of the family ; in this case only does it have its
 783 terrible repercussion on the life of the community. Married
 people who have regular sexual relations, "who are hot," constitute a danger in the three following connections.

1) They are dangerous to those *individual members of the community* who are in a weak state of health and in whom disease would gain new strength if they entered into contact with married people. This is true of the master of the village when he is seriously ill (I. p. 133), of the mother who has given birth to a baby (I. p. 43), of the baby itself which is considered as "being not yet firm," (and sexual relations are forbidden to its parents until they have tied the cotton string round its loins) (I. p. 45, 58) ; of circumcised boys (I. p. 80, 93) ; of convalescents, who must not tread on the same paths as married folk or, if they do so, must tie round their ankles a root of the *sungi* juncus as a protection against the emanation, or perspiration (*nyukd*) which married people have left in their footprints or on the grass. During their whole convalescence sexual relations have been strictly forbidden to them (Ch. III. B. III. 4).

2) Sexual relations constitute a danger *to the community itself* as a whole, when its existence is threatened. They are prohibited in time of epidemic. Mboza, having heard that a proclamation had been issued in Lourenço Marques on account of an epidemic, was convinced that the object of the decree was to suspend sexual relations amongst the White community! The same law applies to all marginal periods, because these are critical times in which the life of the community is threatened. This is the case during the Great Mourning (I. p. 150). Mourners must *keep quiet* ; if not, there might be quarrels, the mourning might "overcome them." Again when moving the village to another place (I. p. 320), the same rule must be observed.

3) Married people again are taboo in certain operations or pursuits, the success of which would be endangered if they took part in them or if they indulged in their ordinary relations. It must not be a married person who sets fire to the furnace in which

the potteress fires her pots (I) (p. 115). Why is this so? No doubt because if married people, who are hot, did it, the fire would become uncontrollable and all the pots would crack. The same reason explains why sexual relations are so strongly prohibited in hunting and fishing. The game or fish would be so wild that it would be impossible to catch it; big game would probably kill the hunters (p. 61). 834
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This conception of the sexual act explains why certain functions in the ritual must be performed by young children, still without knowledge of sexual matters, or by old women past the time of childbearing and consequently belonging to the asexual class (I, p. 466).

How is it possible to explain, on the other hand, that this act, so severely prohibited on so many occasions, should be the great purifying act by which the community gets rid of the defilement of death and returns to normal life? We have seen that this is the case after the death of an important person in the village as well as when the village itself moves to another place, probably in consequence of defilement by the loss of some of its members. Notice that the sexual act, in order to obtain the desired result, must be accomplished in the ritual fashion, i. e. s. n. i. (I. Annotatio 2 and 13). It would seem that, in the Thonga mind, death defiles not only the belongings of the deceased, his implements, his assegais, even his fire, but also his parents, even the parents of his wife, and above all, those secretions of the genital organs which are the very fountain of their life, and through which the community is maintained and multiplied. They must be cleansed in order that the social group may re-enter upon a normal state. The ceremonies which we have described (I. p. 152-156 and 320-328) are highly significant. Each couple must perform the rite in turn and all must participate in a collective lustration which takes 834
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(1) According to the Rev. Ed. W. Smith the same rule is observed in the smelting operations of the Ba-Ila. A little boy and a little girl are put into the kiln when it is about a foot high and they must crack a bean in their mouths and swallow it. We have here a very good example of Bantu primitive philosophy. The innocence or, as we may say, the coolness, of the little ones will prevent the flame from being too fierce and spoiling the whole operation, whilst the slow cracking of the bean will ensure the success of the smelting process (Smith and Dale, *The Ila-Speaking People*, I. p. 205).

834 place at a given spot and according to a given order of precedence.
 783 This will bring about the definite restoration of the village and a
 761 new and pure life will henceforth be possible.

827 I ought perhaps to offer some excuse for having dwelt at some
 length on a subject which is generally left alone as indelicate.
 I hope however that my readers will agree with me that all these
 physiological conceptions and all these strange customs, far from
 being of a lascivious or licentious character, denote, on the contrary,
 a deep and earnest conception of life and an aspiration towards
 purity which it is most interesting to observe. They are at the
 same time amongst the most striking manifestations of Bantu
 Dynamism.

827 Beside these great principles of Thonga physiology, I may
 576 mention a few other ideas relating to the various secretions of
 the human body.

578 *Spitting* (ku thuka) is a sign of want of respect, as we have seen
 (p. 310). It is especially prohibited in the presence of people who
 are eating, and if any one should spit, they will insult the culprit,
 saying to him: "Eat your own shikohlolo!" — When some one
 expectorates, others present will cover the phlegm with sand, not
 on account of taboo, but from disgust.

826 *Blood* (ngati, yin-tin) is also instinctively covered with sand, as
 791 soon as it has been shed. This is a taboo, because wizards
 might use it to bewitch you! The charms of the wizards are
 commonly called *tingati*, bloods.

827 As regards *sweat* (nyuku, mu-mi), although I cannot assert
 that the idea is universal, I think it is conceived as coming from
 outside and falling on men like the dew (mbere) on the grass.
 When they enter a place which is close, Natives say: "There is
 sweat here." The etymology of this word is *ku nyuka*, to melt.

Excrement (matjimba) is looked upon as disgusting, but there
 is no taboo in connection with it.

Yawning (yahlamula) is attended with no superstition.

Hiccough (shitikwane) is not feared in children, but very much
 so in the case of sick people.

Belching (bisa) is sometimes considered as the result of having
 been bewitched, especially if the patient becomes thin. Magicians

also belch, to show the mysterious power hidden within them.

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When any one *sneezes* it is the signal for bestowing upon him good wishes : "Butomi ni burongo!" — "Life and sleep!" The sneezer himself may begin to pray as follows : "Bupsayi! Bukwari! (two liturgical words of invocation to the gods) I pray to you! I have no anger against you! Be with me, and let me sneeze! Let me know sleep and let me know life, that I may go by the road, that I may find an antelope (dead in the bush), that I may take it on my shoulders; or that I may go and kill 'ndlopfu bukene,' an elephant, (viz., meet with a girl and obtain her favour), etc. Now I say it is enough, you my nose!"

Cutting the *hair* has been referred to already (I, p. 146, II, p. 99). In Tembe and Nondwane there is a curious superstition regarding hair : it is taboo to throw it away without precaution, otherwise a bird called *makhondjwana*, or *ñwantshekuto*, might find it and line its nest with it, and your hair would not grow any more!

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IV. *The human soul.*

Thongas have a quantity of names to designate the *psychic faculties* and generally locate them in various organs of the body. *Patience* resides in the liver, and the identification is so complete that there is but one word to express both the organ and the virtue : *shibindji!* *Hatred* is located in the spleen, and both are called *libengo* (from *ku benga*, to hate). *Mbilu*, the heart, is the seat of *genius* and intellectual gifts. A man expert in certain arts and crafts has been taught by his heart. From the heart come the decisions of the will : a heathen cannot be converted to Christianity because his heart has not yet told him to be so (*mbilu a yi si hlaya*). To have a good heart implies kindness, compassion. The chest, *shifuba*, not the lungs, is the seat of intelligence and eloquence (as *pectus* in Latin). A dumb man is a man "whose chest is dead." The diaphragm either *lipfalo*, sing., or *timpfalo*, plur., or *mapfalo*, is the conscience ; its contractions are identical with qualms of conscience (p. 75). The head and the bowels do not seem to be the seat of any special faculty.

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occasions he has been presented with a chicken as an encotragment; but on the day of the hondlola, when his skill is joyfully affirmed, and the cure an accomplished fact, accounts must be definitely settled with the nanga, who will henceforth discontinue his visits. 756

III. Conception of Disease.

The preceding details make it possible for us to understand the conceptions which underlie these rites and ceremonies. Possessing as they do so few and such inaccurate notions regarding Anatomy or Physiology, it is not surprising that correct pathological knowledge is absolutely non-existent amongst South African Bantus. In fact this knowledge is both superficial and superstitious. I shall try to prove this by a study of the names given to the diseases, the causes to which they are attributed, the notion of contagion, and the ideas underlying the rites which mark the end of a disease. 753

1) As regards the method of naming diseases, it is most childish. Thongas call the complaint from which they suffer by the name of the organ affected; for instance "I have a foot, I have a hand, I have a neck" (ndji ni nenge, boko, nkolo) means "I have a pain in my foot, my hand or my neck." These curious expressions doubtless arise from the fact that no notice is taken of the existence of any particular organ until something goes wrong with it. "He has a head" means "He is mad." For "I have a headache," the expression "ndji yingela nhloko," meaning "I feel my head," would generally be used. Very often one hears complaints of "a blood" (ngati) which moves from spot to spot, finally taking up its abode in the side or in the stomach, or elsewhere. This is an idea similar to that of the morbid humours of olden days. There are then as many diseases as there are organs, and we are often asked for remedies for the "nape of the neck complaint," or for the "inside trouble." This latter might be gastritis, congestion of the liver, or dysentery, and we should often be wholly at a loss how to prescribe were it not for the highly picturesque, and often particularly appropriate, imagery used by the patients, or by their friends, in describing the various symptoms; for instance when 753 827

753 a sufferer from "inside trouble" says that "it bites" (*luma*),
 ● 827 we know that it is a case of intestinal colic. But it becomes somewhat puzzling when a patient declares that he suffers from an intestinal worm which passes from his stomach into his neck and returns through his lungs, when it does not happen to take a fancy to remain in his head! "It makes a sound like *pfie...pfie...*," said an old man to me when describing this animal, which plays an important part in the medical science of the Natives (1). (I. p. 48.)

[164] There are, however, certain technical terms which are used to designate some diseases; thus *mukuhlwana* means cough and the mucous catarrh of the throat and nose. The ordinary *mbukulu* seems to be tonsilitis, while the special *mbukulu* is an affliction accompanied by fever, vertigo, delirium and madness, which is generally attributed to the malign influences of the spirits of the departed. — Hydrocele (*masangu*, or *masenge*) is wide-spread and well-known, as is also bilharzia, a form of haematuria called *shinyalu* or *ndjundjwane*, which appears in severe forms and is due to a special parasite. Rheumatism is called *shifambo*, the runner, as it moves from spot to spot. Syphilis, imported long ago by Europeans, is universally known, and is, alas, so general in the neighbourhood of the town of Lourenço Marques that almost all Natives suffer from it. The Natives call it *buba* (probably from *bubo*). Gonorrhoea is of more recent importation, and dates — according to my informant Tobane — from the time of the construction of the Pretoria Railway; it is called *shikandjameti*, the disease which crushes the villages.

The eruptive diseases are perhaps those best recognized by the Natives. *Shintshinana* is the name for measles, but seems also applicable to scarlet fever. Small-pox is called *nyedzana*, and, as regards psychic or nervous troubles, the treatment of which

(1) I may here mention that the tape worm and the lumbric, both called *tinyekana*, small snakes, are very common amongst Natives, and are well known to them. They even think that these worms are necessary for digestion. An old woman had asked one of my colleagues to give her a vermifuge, and the drug had been successful. But she came back to ask him to give her another medicine to prevent all the inhabitants from escaping. Some of them must remain in her body "because," as the old woman said, "who would eat my food afterwards"?

we have just studied, they are attributed either to Heaven or to evil spirits or to the winds. The name of the *wutleka* disease is worthy of notice. This word comes from *wutla*, which means to rob, to seize; *wutleka*, the qualificative derivative (Thonga Grammar § 196) means the condition of something taken away. This would seem to be a passive meaning, as if the patient had been robbed by some agent. However, Mankhelu explains the term by saying: "The patient has stolen the *rirabi*" — "a *wutle rirabi*". *Rirabi* is very closely allied to a word meaning stick; the old doctor says it is the name of the disease. If this etymology be correct the patient would be considered as having taken the disease by a kind of robbery. But Native etymology must always be accepted with caution.

All these names show how unprecise is the pathological knowledge of the Thongas.

2) As regards the *causes of diseases*, Thongas are groping in the grossest superstition. When a medical man wishes to treat a disease, he first tries to diagnose its cause. The Bantu *nanga* does the same, only the difference is that he takes very little notice of the physical symptoms. There is no auscultation, no palpation, no examination of the secretions, blood, saliva, or urine, as these are disgusting and must be covered with sand as soon as possible! The great means of diagnosing a disease is the throwing of bones. There are three great causes of disease: the spirits of the gods, the wizards and the *makhumo*, defilement from death or from impure persons. A fourth less common cause is Heaven. The bones will reveal by the way in which they fall which is the one to be combated.

3) Their ideas of *contagion* are not much in advance of their other pathological conceptions. The two most dreaded diseases in this respect are consumption (*lifuba*) and leprosy (*nhlokonho*). *Consumption* is by no means a new ailment due to civilisation, though it has increased enormously since Thonga boys have gone to the towns. A proof that it has been known for a long time is to be found in its great importance in the ritual. To the Thonga mind it is caused by the *makhumo*, i. e., the contamination of death, or the defilement resulting from contact with a woman in

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756 it in half. I take a little of the heart, and of the eyes, I crush the
 791 bones, I make a powder with all these ingredients, and this is my great medicine. With one of the bones I make a flute ; I put a little powder into it, and, when a thunderstorm breaks, I go outside without danger and conjure the lightning by playing on my flute, etc." (p. 314).

Mathuza, the magician of Nondwane to whom I have just alluded, was essentially a detector of *baloyi*. — So was also *Nwashihandjime*, the great Nkuna magician, a splendid creature, tall, his eyes beaming with a kind of supernatural light. I once saw him, after having performed the "smelling out" rite, point out a woman with the tail he always carried with him, an enormous tail fixed on a handle richly decorated with beads and copper wire.

[825] This tail, which is one of the most common attributes of the *mungoma*, is generally a *gnu tail*. It is said that when a mother gnu has dropped her offspring, she beats it (*phyita*) with her tail and thus gives the new-born gnu the necessary strength to walk and follow its mother. Hence the peculiar magic use of the gnu tail. In its very middle are hidden certain drugs which possess a revelatory virtue ; the magician puts his nose right amongst the hair before pronouncing his sentence and beating (*phyita*) the *noyi*. *Nwashihandjime* is said to have disappeared from his village for months, and to have come back from the desert emaciated but full of new magical powers. I once tried to draw his attention to things more spiritual than his art and his drugs. He gazed at me with wild eyes, as if unable to follow my demonstration ; suddenly he emitted a cry very similar to a hiccough and turned his back.

● [827] (Hiccoughing is a well-known symptom, showing either that one has been bewitched by "*mitisa*," or that one possesses magical power).

At the station of Shiluvane I once made an inventory of the charms of another Nkuna magician. In his hair the man wore a brass bracelet and some rings, and a necklace with a sixpence attached, all these objects having been inherited from his father, who was himself a *mungoma* ; moreover he hung round his neck a little piece of the skin of a goat, which had been sacrificed after the death of his father ; in this way he tried to acquire and keep